

riches, mostly political
things.

Isaac Myers

SPEECH

OF

MR. M'DOWELL, OF OHIO,

ON

THE TARIFF.

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MAY 3, 1844.

The bill reported by Mr. McKAY from the Committee of Ways and Means, to alter, modify, and amend the tariff act of 1842, (Mr. HOPKINS in the chair,) being under consideration before the House in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

MR. MCDOWELL said:

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have listened with profound attention to the arguments of gentlemen who have preceded me in this discussion, and I have endeavored to weigh them with impartiality; and but for the relations which I sustain to a portion of the great agricultural West, and the close and intimate connection of their interests with the principles involved in this bill, I should have adopted the course which I pursued at the early stages of this session, of awaiting the result, and casting a silent vote. But, sir, if I rightly understand the objects of this bill—if I properly apprehend its operation upon the country—it holds out a great inducement, not only for my vote, but for my voice in its defence. It proposes a reduction of the burdens imposed by the present tariff law upon the great agricultural interest of the country, in which the intelligent people I have the honor to represent are embraced. To the success of such a proposition that class would look with the greatest solicitude, because its profits are less in proportion to the capital and labor employed, and more hardly obtained, than those of any other class within the limits of the Union. Their labor is the capital of the country, upon which the prosperity and happiness of all other classes depend; but when we look to the course of legislation heretofore pursued in regard to its interests, and recollect the various methods devised by almost all other classes and professions to draw from the agricultural class an undue proportion of its earnings for their own aggrandizement, and to shift the burdens of taxation from their own shoulders to this great class, the wonder is that it has a spark of vitality left, or the patience to bear the tortures that have been, and are still inflicted upon it.

Unlike any other class, however, the agricultural, without complaint, maintains all the burdens im-

posed upon it by the government, nor suffers abatement of its sturdy integrity or independence. While under the deepest pecuniary embarrassment and depression, it looks to no aid but its own right arm, to no resource but its own productive power for alleviation. Patience, industry, and economy, are its household words; and although depressed in its energies, or crushed for a time by the extortions of the government and the combination of all other classes, yet, through the steady exercise of its indomitable perseverance and recuperative strength, it rises, phoenix-like, from the dust, with health, and prosperity, and healing in its wings. In its prosperity all other interests are restored, while often, in the oppressive task of sustaining the impositions of legislation, it suffers alone.

The bill now under consideration, Mr. Chairman, proposes various modifications in the principles and details of the existing law; and notwithstanding the care with which it has been matured, there are yet many imperfections in its provisions and details. There are many imported articles entering into the general consumption of the country, which have become necessities of life, and upon which, though the duties levied by this bill are a great reduction upon the act of 1842, yet I feel satisfied, the rates of duty are too high to be consistent with a fair and equal taxation. The articles of sugar, molasses, bar-iron, and chains, constitute a portion of dutiable imports upon which I could wish to see the tariff still further reduced. But if a majority of the committee shall differ with me on this point, and the bill shall be reported back to the House preserving its present form, I shall, however reluctantly, from the considerations presented, vote for it, because, in its general provisions, I regard it as greatly preferable to the existing law. I am, sir, in favor of a *tariff*, but not of the *tariff*; and while opposing the impositions of the law of 1842, I cannot consent to be placed in the category of the advocates of *free trade*, if, by this designation, I am to understand that it discountenances a wise, discriminative revenue tariff. The complex and manifold machinery of the general government requires a vast annual revenue to

keep it in motion; and aside from the proceeds of the public lands, there is no other source of revenue than the imposition of duties on foreign goods and tonnage, except the last alternative of direct taxation. The question now before the committee is not whether we shall adopt direct taxation or a tariff, but whether we shall pursue in our action the powers delegated to us by the constitution, in levying duties for revenue, or violate them for purposes of protection. This, sir, to my comprehension, is the distinction between the democratic and the whig parties; and upon this issue, I take my stand in this discussion, and upon no other. To repeat the proposition, sir: I regard the democratic party as favorable to a revenue tariff, sufficient to sustain an economical administration of the government, with such discriminations upon the various articles of foreign production as will be most advantageous in the collection of revenue. The whig party, on the other hand, as their defence of the existing "tariff" exhibits, are for a tariff for protection as the first object, and for revenue as the mere incidental consideration. The position assumed by the democratic party, is, as I humbly conceive, abundantly sustained, in both the letter and the spirit of the constitution, while the doctrine of our opponents is contrary to both. The 8th section of the federal constitution reads thus:

"The Congress of the United States shall have power to lay and collect duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts, and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States," &c.

Here it is seen, Mr. Chairman, that a specific grant of power is conferred to lay and collect duties, taxes, imposts, and excises; but, sir, for what purpose? Why, the latter clause of the same section specifies and marks out the limitations by saying, "to pay the debts, and provide for the common defence and general welfare." The power to lay and collect duties, &c., is a specific, substantive grant of power, and limited in its exercise by the succeeding portion of the section, to objects therein enumerated, and to which alone these collections, when made, are constitutionally applicable. Now, sir, it does seem to me, that in the exercise of the power to lay and collect duties, &c., we are not authorized to look to any other object than the section indicates and points out; and it points out no other purpose than revenue, and the objects to which it shall be applied. The debts of the government cannot be paid until the necessary funds are collected for their liquidation; nor can the "common defence," or "general welfare," be effected without the means. If I am right, sir, in this position, (and I have no doubt of it,) gentlemen who claim the constitutional power to protect manufactures cannot be sustained by the specific grants of the section just referred to, as the basis of our argument to the contrary. But it is asserted that the power to protect this interest is said to be embraced in the final provisions of the eighth section of the constitution, and as properly included within its limitations. If this assumption be correct, the right only exists under the appropriating power of Congress, and must be accomplished by a legislative distribution of a bounty to manufacturers, and not through the process of invidious taxation. Are gentlemen ready to claim this at the hands of Congress? Are they ready to demand a bounty from the public treasury to manufacturers, in lieu of a tax upon the consumer, for their support.

But, sir, let us suppose (in order to place this exercise of power by Congress in its true light) that the duties derived, or derivable, from imports are in-

adequate to support the government, and afford means to give to each manufacturer the bounty needed, would it not be competent for Congress, if the duties derived do really exist, to lay, in addition to the duties for revenue, a direct tax for the payment of the bounties thus claimed, and to be thus dispensed? Will gentlemen assert this, or are they ready to meet such a question before the American people? And yet, such is the issue, if the power claimed by them has any authority or existence under the constitution. If the protective power does exist under the provisions of the constitution, as one of its original objects and designs, it exists without limitation as to the amount to be appropriated, and the mode by which its collection is to be accomplished; and if it is to be considered as the settled constitutional doctrine, it must lead to taxation as heartless and oppressive towards all other classes of the country, in its ultimate operation, as the exercise of the same power does in Great Britain upon the great laboring masses of her people.

But, again, Mr. Chairman, if the power has an existence without limitation, the mode of its exercise is reduced to a mere question of discretion; and Congress may just as well enact a law commanding the people of any one State, or of the Union, not to buy of England and France, but that their purchases should be made from Massachusetts or Rhode Island; thus leaving the manufacturers of these States to fix their own prices upon their goods, and upon the produce of the farmer in exchange. It is true that this direct mode of accomplishing the same end might be objected to by these protective gentlemen, lest the free people of this country might again (as they have done heretofore) rebel against so flagrant an exercise of the power claimed by them. But does not the present law, in effect, produce the same result? Has it not driven, by its provisions, a large amount of foreign articles from our market? Has it not compelled the purchaser of those taxed goods to pay an additional cost, as a bounty to manufacturers, of from 40 to 150 per cent.? What, then, sir, is this, but Congress saying, through the present law, that American citizens shall buy of Massachusetts or Rhode Island, and not of England or France? Or, in other words, that if they purchase such and such articles from abroad, they shall pay a bounty upon them for the support of the monopolies at home engaged in the manufacture of such articles—that A shall sell his produce to B at B's own price, and buy B's articles at the extent of the tax added to the cost of the foreign article. And yet, sir, it is insisted that such a law is not an infraction of the limitations of the constitution, nor of the rights attempted to be secured under its authority.

The party, however, to which I have the honor to be attached, Mr. Chairman, do not deny that a revenue tariff may not be so regulated in its discriminations as to afford protection incidentally; but maintain, on the contrary, that all the protection which the manufacturing class can receive from the government must be afforded through its action in the assessment of duties for revenue; for, when you levy an imposition of 25 per cent. for revenue upon an article imported, it must have the effect, to the extent of the imposition, of a protection to the home manufacturer, by enabling him to sell at an advance of 25 per cent. upon the price, by reason of the government tax upon the foreign article. The power, then, sir, in my humble judgment, exists mainly as an incidental power in the

exercise of the general power of taxation granted expressly to Congress, and not as a direct and specifically granted power under the constitution. But, sir, aside from all constitutional grounds of objection to the existing tariff law, there are objections of expediency equally fatal. I allude to its destructive operation upon individuals, upon classes, and upon the general national prosperity. The tariff of 1828, known as the "bill of abominations," differed but little in its essential provisions from the leading features of the present law; and the history of its development, as exhibited in its operation, sustains the objections which I entertain to the act of 1842.

Sir, it constituted one of the most efficient elements, combined with others of the period of its existence, that prostrated the energies, and for a time overthrew and suspended the prosperity, of country. And such must again be the legitimate and inevitable tendency of any system which directly or indirectly controls the citizen in the exercise of his discretion in disposing of his own property, on his own terms, and at a market of his own selection. Trade, and the operations of trade, should be left as free as possible; for the laws that are natural to it have been demonstrated as quite sufficient for its regulation. The tariff of 1828 attempted a diversion of trade from its natural and national channels; and government, through the merely artificial principles and regulations of the law, and for the purpose of what is called home protection, created a state of affairs which terminated only in general disorganization and paralysis. The manufacturing interest protected by the government, called upon the banks for facilities to more extended operations; the prospect of profit to manufacturers became a mania after the passage of the law; the banks loaded with reckless liberality, and expanded their circulation beyond precedent in this enterprise; and these expansions, by the general diffusion of paper money, augmented the sales and the profits of the manufacturers, till the whole manufacturing interest thought that the protective system was the climax of legislative wisdom, and the infallible source of all political prosperity.

Thus it was, sir, that the steady and regular course of business and of trade was diverted into new channels, and carried on by an artificial tide of success, as delusive in its character as it was brief in its duration. The day of reckoning came upon us, in the midst of our excesses; and a general proclamation of bankruptcy was the very natural result. Sir, is this a fancy sketch, or is it not the history of events, fresh within the memory of every representative on this floor? But, further to sustain my position, I find in one of the speeches of Mr. Calhoun, delivered in the Senate in 1840, the most satisfactory testimony. It exhibits the expansion of the circulation of the banks of the manufacturing States for the years 1830 and '32, he not having been able to procure a statement for 1829 and 1831, and the balance of the tariff period, up to the explosion of the banks.

The circulation of the banks of Massachusetts for the years 1830 and '32, was as follows: For 1830, \$4,730,000; 1832, \$7,700,000; or 65 per cent. increase. In Rhode Island, in 1830, the bank circulation was \$670,000; in 1832, \$1,340,000, or an augmentation of 100 per cent. In New York, in 1830, the circulation of the banks was \$10,000,000; in 1832, it was \$14,000,000, or an increase of 40 per cent. In Pennsylvania, in 1830, the circulation was \$7,300,000; in 1832, \$8,760,000, or an increase of

20 per cent. The circulation of the Bank of the United States, in 1830, was \$15,300,000; in 1832, \$24,600,000—being an increase of 67 per cent. The aggregate amount of circulation of these States was, in 1830, \$38,000,000; in 1832, \$56,500,000. These are but the results of the two closing years of the tariff of 1828; and I doubt not, if the estimates could be had for the whole period, similar results would be developed. The estimates I have furnished show that the increase of bank circulation, within the periods indicated, was almost in exact proportion to the amount of protective duties laid by the tariff.

I have thus attempted to show, sir, what I have asserted to be true, viz: that the tariff of 1828 contributed largely to the disarrangement of trade from the expansion of the currency of the country, in inflated prices of produce, land, &c., the winding up of which state of things was so signally disastrous to all concerned. Nor was this expansion of the paper circulation confined to the aforesaid manufacturing States. The banks of these States led the way, and were followed by the excessive issues of the banks of all the States of the Union. The advance of all articles in the country followed the increase of paper money, until the prices at which they were purchased would not admit of exportation and sale in foreign markets where their circulation was 50 per cent. less than ours. The result was, that the holders of the produce here held on for a small advance, until the bubble exploded, and they sunk amid the general crash. It was at the climax of this period of bank expansion that wheat was imported to the United States from Europe, and sold at a profit for a less price than our dealers could take without sacrifice. It was at this period, sir, that the extraordinary spectacle was exhibited to the world of a great producing country, with a surplus of produce on hand, augmenting that surplus by the purchase of breadstuffs from foreign countries. I know, sir, it has been charged by some of the politicians of the country, that the deplorable state of things I have been describing was the result of the repeal of the tariff act of 1828, and the establishment of the act of 1833, familiarly known as the compromise act. Indeed, sir, I must express my surprise to have heard gentlemen on this floor repeat what I had supposed every sensible man had condemned; but my surprise has been even greater to hear gentlemen assert that the prosperity of the country now was the effect of the tariff of 1842, and that this fact sustained the charges of ruin brought upon the country by the compromise act.

And now, Mr. Chairman, without designing to enter into any very extended argument on these points, I shall briefly review them as they have been presented, and demonstrate, by the conclusive testimony of dates and figures, the total fallacy of these assumptions. And first, I remark, that the suspension of the banks, from 1837 up to the year 1841, was the incubus that hung upon and palsied the energies of the country, and the only true cause of its commercial prostration and pecuniary distress. And it is a fact equally familiar to the people, that the interests of the country have been gradually recovering and advancing from their prostration, from the moment of the general resumption of specie payments by the banks in 1841. That act, sir, expelled at once the depreciated and worthless paper of all the broken and rotten banks of the country from the channels of circulation; and they were once more, but to a limited extent, filled with

either gold or silver, or paper that was equivalent, by reason of its convertibility into *bona fide* "hard money," at the option of the holder. True, this act of general resumption reduced the paper circulation of the country to an amount less than the sum of the silver and gold in circulation, and in the vaults of the banks. But, sir, it at once regulated the exchanges of the country to the specie standard; it restored confidence between man and man; and it imparted life and renewed activity into the domestic trade, business, and commerce of the country.

The present tariff act took effect in September, 1842, more than eighteen months after the universal resumption by the banks, when the produce of the country was sought after by the capitalists at home and from abroad, and was steadily rising in value. I will not, however, close the refutations of the positions assumed by gentlemen on the other side, with the mere recapitulation of dates and circumstances; but shall, at the hazard of being considered tedious, give in figures the unanswerable argument, that proves the injurious operation of the tariff of 1828, upon the interests of the country, and the beneficial operation of the compromise act of 1832-'3, upon the same. I find, from an examination of the tables of exports of domestic produce, from the year 1824 to 1833, including the high tariff periods of 1824 and 1828, that the aggregate amount of exports was \$469,198,564. I find, also, Mr. Chairman, that our exports from 1833 to 1842, during the operation of the compromise act, amounted to the sum of \$768,352,365, which give an annual average of exports of \$96,442,785; and an aggregate gain of the latter period upon the former of \$299,174,791, and an average annual gain of \$38,646,855. The statistical tables of the custom-houses show, also, that the exports of domestic manufactures for the same periods, were as follows:

The aggregate amount of exports during the high-tariff period from 1824 to 1833, was \$43,180,755, and for the low-tariff period from 1833 to 1842, \$65,917,018; the increase of these exports during the latter period, over the former, being about \$22,000,000. They show about the same state of facts in relation to our tonnage, and the imports and exports of specie. The aggregate amount of foreign tonnage for the same period, under the high tariff, was 686,989 tons; and of coasting tonnage, 752,456 tons—making an aggregate of 1,439,455: whilst under the later period of the low- or revenue tariff, our foreign tonnage was 896,664 tons; and that of our coasting trade 1,280,999 tons—making an aggregate of 2,180,763 tons; and an increase for the latter period over the former, of 741,303 tons. The imports and exports of specie, from 1821 to 1831, a period of high protection, were as follows:

Aggregate amount of imports of specie \$76,450,580. Aggregate amount of exports \$80,226,628. Showing an excess of exports over imports of \$3,776,048. The imports and exports of specie, on the other hand, sir, from 1831 to 1841, a like period in duration of low duties, were: Exports \$67,859,294. Imports, \$105,139,234. Giving an excess of imports of specie over the exports, of \$37,279,940.

I have thus endeavored to exhibit, Mr. Chairman, by facts and figures, that the assumptions of gentlemen who charge the prostration of trade and business to the effects arising from the repeal of the act of 1828, and the operations of the compromise act, to be unfounded in truth; and that, instead of the interests of the country having been destroyed by the operation of the law of 1832, that our commerce

was more flourishing; that our exports and trade were augmented under its operation to a large amount, as compared with the exports of the high-tariff period; and, further, that, during the latter period, there was added a large increase of specie to the capital and circulation of the country—a contribution, to the extent of the increase, to the increased prosperity of the country.

I shall now, sir, very briefly attempt to prove, by the figures and dates which I shall produce, that the manufacturing establishments of the country, during the period—or rather, a portion of the period—of low duties, were in a more prosperous condition than at any other time; and that, so far from the assumption being true, that they were in a bankrupt condition, and unable to prosecute their business, on the contrary, they purchased more of the cotton of the South, and manufactured more goods, than at any previous period. The amount of cotton imported into Boston from 1835 to 1840, inclusive, and from the 1st January, 1841, to the 25th May, of the same year, (a little less than five months,) as taken from the Boston Atlas of 1842, is as follows: In 1835, (in round numbers,) 80,000 bales; in 1836, 82,000 bales; in 1837, 82,000 bales; in 1838, 96,000 bales; in 1839, 94,000 bales; in 1840, 136,000 bales; and from the 1st January to the 25th May, 1841, 93,000; and for the year 1841, as estimated, 150,000 bales—almost double the consumption as compared with the high-tariff year 1835. The writer of the money articles in the New York Herald of the same year, and who seems to have drawn his statements from authentic sources, if we may judge from their details and minutiae, states that the amount of goods manufactured at Lowell in 1839 was 58,263,400 yards; and in 1840, 73,853,400 yards—making an increase in a single year of 15,590,000 yards, more than 25 per cent., in that branch, in the entire growth, in that flourishing town, from its foundation to the beginning of the year 1840.

Sir, these are facts for the country which speak the language of "truth and soberness," and entirely annihilate all the miserable cant and sophistry that have been employed by the opposition to substantiate the false issues assumed against the compromise act.

Again, sir: If it be true, as gentlemen have alleged, that the manufacturing interest was struck down by the compromise act, and reduced to bankruptcy, by what singular art of legerdemain or legislative *hocus pocus* were they, upon the passage of the present law, enabled to concentrate and distribute, by the purchase of all the surplus of the country, the vast capital that was requisite to effect this change, when they, just before, were broken down and disabled to prosecute their business? Does not every man see the utter fallacy of such assertions? But suppose, sir, that they were in a sound condition: can they coin money, or supply enough from their profits in a year to have filled the channels of circulation that had already been nearly exhausted by the bank explosions and suspensions of the panic era of 1837 to 1841, inclusive? Sir, I have shown you how these channels were being filled when this act was passed. The increase of capital that was revivifying, reproducing, and extending the industrial pursuits of the country, was the product of our exports during the period of the compromise act, as I believe has been sufficiently illustrated. Yes, sir; the large balances of specie brought into this country, instead of goods, during the last years of the general suspension, gave that impulse to trade, business, and

commerce, which saved the country from hopeless ruin and irretrievable bankruptcy. The elements of this resuscitation were not derived from the manufacturing interest under a high protection, but from the products of the great agricultural class, and the means of business introduced into the country by the specie derived from the sale of their surplus in foreign markets. The substratum of all our prosperity and wealth—the basis of all our happiness, virtue, and patriotism—arises from the industry and the grand moral power which the great agricultural class holds in its control. And, Mr. Chairman, I thank Heaven that it is so; and that this class does now, and will, as I hope, for centuries in perpetuity, maintain its wholesome and preponderating influence over all others. It is among the yeomanry of the land, that we must look for those sturdy republican characteristics which distinguish us as a nation among all the nations of the earth. Unobtrusive, virtuous, and contented, you never find them, sir, infesting your halls of legislation, extorting laws at your hands to legalize on their part the plundering of their neighbors; nor for impositions to their own benefit upon any other class of their fellow-citizens. No, sir; their services, and their resources, and their lives, they are ever ready to lay down upon the altar of their country, in the preservation of its institutions, its liberty, and its integrity!

I have now, Mr. Chairman, answered, as I think, the assumptions of gentlemen on the other side, and shown, conclusively, that it was not the repeal of the tariff act of 1828, nor the enactment of the compromise law of 1833, that produced the prostration of all the business interests of the country; and that the act of 1842 had no agency whatever in the general revival of business, and the present progressive prosperity of the country; but, on the contrary, that the act of 1828 contributed more directly than all other causes, to the paralysis which for the last few years weighed down the mighty energies of the American people, and kept them prostrate in the dust. I have shown also, sir, that it is to the increased exports of the producers of the country, pending the operation of the compromise act, that we are indebted for the vast increase of specie which alone saved us from impending and irretrievable bankruptcy, and imparted vitality and vigor to all the great interests of the country.

But, sir, there is another assumption of the friends of a high protective tariff, equally as preposterous as those I have noticed, as I shall be able most clearly to establish; it is, *that high duties make low prices*. This position, I find, is adopted in the report of the Committee on Manufactures, made by the honorable gentleman from Massachusetts, [Mr. Huxson.] In that report the committee assume, first, that foreign manufacturers can obtain their capital for about two-thirds, and their labor for about one-third or one-fourth, less than the manufacturers in the United States; and thus the idea of anything like a fair competition, under these circumstances, is altogether out of the question. Now, after admitting this important fact, and claiming that the manufacturer here ought to be protected by duties upon articles of foreign production, to enable him to compete with the foreign manufacturer, he then turns round and asserts that the tax thus laid upon imported goods does not increase their cost, but rather tends to diminish it. This assumption he attempts to prove in the report by a most singular process of reasoning—namely, that the importer will be able to buy of the English or French manu-

facturer, the same description of articles that he before purchased, at just such a reduction of the prime cost as will counteract the duty imposed by the tariff here; or, in other words, that the foreign manufacturer and importer will, between them, sell the goods imported at just the amount of the duty imposed less than their previous charges, and thus prevent, by the competition for a market, any advance at least upon the prices paid in the absence of a tariff of protection. Now, sir, if I comprehend the gentleman's positions, they are absolutely antagonistic to each other; and if either be true, the other must be false; for, if a duty of 50 per cent. be necessary to protect the cloth-maker in this country against the foreign competitor, how can the 50 per cent. operate as a protection to the former, if the latter sells to the importer at just the amount of duty under the former prices? Certainly, under such a state of things, the tariff of protection would be no protection, because the foreign cloth would still monopolize the home market. On the other hand, if the duty imposed effects the object of protection, the price of the foreign cloth must unavoidably be increased 50 per cent., where that is the extent of the imposition, which would enable the home manufacturer to sell at the same price. In further illustration of the case, I will give an example or two that cannot be misunderstood or controverted. I will suppose (a truth, if my information be correct) that, under a tariff of 25 per cent., Swedish bar-iron could be brought to this country and sold at 2 cents per pound, which our manufacturer of iron of the same quality and kind, could not afford to sell at less, if you please, than at 4 cents per pound. Finding that he cannot compete with the foreigner, he appeals to Congress to protect him against the Swedish importer, in a duty of 100 per cent., which will compel him to sell his importations at 4 cents also, or drive him from the market; and Congress levies the desired imposition. Now, sir, does not this duty of 100 per cent., thus imposed, protect or enable the domestic manufacturer to sell his iron at the old price of 4 cents, by raising the cost of the imported article to that standard. If not, what has the domestic manufacturer gained by the 100 per cent. tariff of "protection?" Just nothing. He is in the same predicament as before, which would certainly tend to establish the declaration of Mr. Clay that "*there is no necessity of protection for protection.*"

But, Mr. Chairman, this is not the state of the case. Would our manufacturers exhibit so much anxiety, and be so lavish of their exertions and their money, in obtaining the ascendancy of the protective party, and through them a protective tariff, if it resulted as the gentleman has assumed? No, sir; far from it. The legitimate effect of the duty of 100 per cent. is, as every man of common observation must know, the very reverse of the operation of the tax as laid down in the gentleman's argument.

The Swedish iron could not be sold without a sacrifice at less than 4 cents per pound, paying the duty of 100 per cent. So, too, with all other articles. Good French boots could be imported here under a revenue tariff, and sold at \$2 per pair, just such as our boot-maker sells at \$3, in which case a duty of 33½ per cent. will compel the importer to raise the price of the French boots to \$3, in order to meet the requisition of the tariff. The operation of the law is clear. Upon every pair of boots purchased either of the French importer, or the domestic manufacturer, the purchaser pays \$1 advance upon

the price paid in the absence of the tariff of $33\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; because the tax levied by the government upon the imported article, is added to its price, and this enables the home manufacturer, who pays no duty, to sell his article also at an advance of \$1, and realize a profit, to that extent, over the profit of the importer, conceding the prime cost in each case to be the same. Therefore, if, in the purchase of four pairs of boots, a farmer pays at a country store \$12 this year, for which the year preceding he only paid \$8, in the absence of a duty of $33\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., it follows that, in the transfer of this duty to him, he pays a tax of \$4 to protect the home manufacturer upon four pairs of common boots. The tariff of 1842, passed by a whig Congress, laid a duty of \$1.25 per pair upon coarse imported boots, which has raised their price to that extent upon the price at which they would be sold were no duty levied upon them. The consumer pays this additional charge in every instance; for the tariff follows all the transfers upon the goods upon which it is laid, until they fall into the hands of the consumer, out of whose pocket the revenues of the government, and the duties of "protection for protection," are all derived. If such be the fact, (and it must be, or the doctrine of protection is all a farce,) I have, by these two simple statements, demolished the paradox that "*high duties make low prices.*"

But, Mr. Chairman, lest the arguments of gentlemen might not be so convincing as they could desire, some of them have dropped all argument, and attempted to drive us into the support of their theory by designating the friends of a judicious revenue tariff as the British party in Congress; and they have appealed to the people to stand up for their own countrymen and protect them against the pauper labor of Great Britain. Yes, sir, strange as it may seem, though not strange considering the quarter whence it emanates, the very party who have been, by means the most invidious and anti-American, trying to fasten upon the people of this country the whole British system of banks, manufactures, privileged orders, corporations, monopolies, taxation, and pauperism, with all its deplorable concomitants; and who take the British side of all questions that arise between that country and ours, and who seek notwithstanding, through a portion of its members, to divest all foreigners seeking the asylum of our shores of the right of citizenship;—strange as it may seem, such a party talk to us and denounce us as the British party—professing themselves to be the exclusive friends of home industry, and the only guardians of the constitution and the rights and liberties of the people. May the wisdom of the people save the country from the tender mercies of such brazen-faced hypocrisy. Sir, who are the importers that we are called upon to throttle and drive out of the country by taxation or high prohibitive duties for protection? They are, from one half to two-thirds of them, American citizens, employed in the business of carrying off the vast surplus produce of the country, and selling or bartering it to other nations, and bringing back in exchange the products and manufactures of those nations. They are the commercial class of the United States—a class next to the agricultural in its contributions to the wealth, the power, and glory of their country. They are branded as British importers by the manufacturing monopolist and his advocates in this House. The law of 1842 was designed to drive this commerce of international exchanges from the ocean; and thus not only inflict a suspension of

their business upon the seas, but an injury upon the whole agricultural community who are dependent for the sales of their surplus productions upon the owners of ships that bear them to a foreign market. That I may be understood in this position, I will put a case for illustration, by supposing that the county of Ross, in the State of Ohio, has a surplus of flour per year of 100,000 barrels; and that A, a trader, has been in the habit of buying it annually and shipping it to England or France, taking, in exchange, or investing the money received, in the manufactured articles of these countries, at a rate that would enable him to sell them in the United States at an advance of 50 per cent., without transcending the prices of our own manufactures of like description. We will suppose that the law obliges him to pay 25 per cent. from his profits to the custom house for the support of government. He does so, and still retains a profit of 25 per cent., which enables him again to buy of the farmers of Ross their surplus of 100,000 barrels of flour. He ships it off as usual; but, in his absence, the domestic manufacturer complains to Congress that he will be broken down if there is not a further duty of 25 per cent. laid on the goods imported by the trader. The prayer of the petitioner as granted, and the duty is increased to fifty per cent. A returns with his merchandise, expecting to pay the usual duty of 25 per cent.; but, much to his astonishment, the custom-house officer informs him that the imposition "for the sake of protection" has been raised from 25 to 50 per cent. A sells out as usual at a gross profit of 50 per cent. which is just sufficient to meet the custom-house extortion, divesting him entirely of his profits. Will A be found again purchasing the surplus flour of the farmers of Ross for that season, or any other season, while the protective imposition of 50 per cent. is drawn upon the foreign goods he receives in exchange for his produce? The present tariff is thus operating; and yet the advocates of a high protective system are attempting to make the farmer believe that his interests are advanced by the law. I have shown how the tariff of 1828 operated upon the domestic exports, and how suddenly the exports expanded upon its repeal; and I now submit to you, Mr. Chairman, to this House, and to the people, a table of exports since the passage of the present law, to show that it has already vastly reduced the exports of the agricultural staples of the country. The law took effect in September, 1842, and from that day to September, 1843, we have the first fiscal year of its operation. The report of the Secretary of the Treasury for this period gives the amount of domestic exports at \$90,494,485, and for 1841, at \$106,382,722; and for 1842, at \$92,969,996; thus exhibiting a falling off in a single year, under the high tariff of 1842, as compared with the exports under the revenue tariff of 1841, of about \$16,000,000; and as compared with 1842, of two and a half millions of dollars; and this, too, chiefly upon the agricultural staples, exclusive of cotton, rice and tobacco. The imports and exports from the 30th September, 1843, up to February, 1844, are, imports about forty-five millions—exports twenty-eight millions. With these facts from the official data looking us in the face, are we to be told that this law in its operation is giving prosperity to the farmer or to the shipping interest. Or shall we sacrifice the shipping interest, in which there are nearly as many persons engaged (including ship carpenters and their families) as there are in the manufactories of the country, and

the whole agricultural class into the bargain, to the rapacity of the manufacturing interest? Sir, I am not the enemy of the manufacturing interest. If the incidental protection afforded it be restrained within fair and equitable limitations, I will be in favor of it. I am willing they should have all the advantages a revenue tariff can afford them, be the amount of protection what it may; and I am sure, sir, that such a tariff incidentally, would abundantly protect them. I say so from the highest authority in the estimation of the opposition—authority which they will not dispute. I allude, sir, to Mr. Clay. He expressly declares that a revenue tariff will be abundantly ample for the purposes of protection. "But, sir, when we are called upon to sacrifice all the other industrial interests of the nation to one exclusive branch of industry, I must, as a friend of the humble tiller of the soil, and of that class who "go out upon the great sea," protest most solemnly against it.

I have a few words to say now to the bootmaker, the hatter, and the tailor, who are appealed to by the manufacturing interest to unite in their crusade against the farmer and trader. They are told that, if foreign boots and shoes, ready-made clothing, and hats, are not exorbitantly taxed, they will drive the home manufacturer of these articles to some other business, or to unavoidable starvation. I desire then to examine the reports of the Secretary of the Treasury to ascertain the amount of the importations of boots, hats, and clothing, antecedent to the passage of the present law of home protection, as it is termed. By such examination it will be discovered that the aggregate imports were—of boots and shoes—

In 1839	-	-	-	\$101,000
Exports the same year	-	-	-	173,000
Hats, leather, wool, and fur, imported—				
In 1839	-	-	-	\$15,000
Exports of same for same year	-	-	-	123,000
1840—				
Boots, shoes, and slippers imported				\$70,000
do do do do exported				214,000
Hats, leather, wool, and fur imported				7,000
do do do do exported				103,000
1841—				
Boots, shoes, &c., imported—	-	-	-	\$17,166
do do exported -	-	-	-	100,725

The number of boot and shoe makers in the United States is estimated (but I cannot vouch for its correctness) at 180,000. Now, sir, the average imports of each of the years 1839-'40-'41 is about \$77,000, coming into competition with the labor of 180,000 domestic boot and shoe makers; or a foreign competition, averaging to each domestic manufacturer about 45 cents per annum—all told. Or, in other words, if no importations had been made, but their amount equally divided among our home manufacturers of the specified articles, each man would have an addition to his yearly aggregate derived from the making of boots and shoes, of the enormous sum of 45 cents. Yet, sir, he is taught to believe that the importer will ruin him without a prohibitive duty of protection. The excess of exports over the imports of these goods, however, will dissipate the delusion. The same regulations of trade will apply to the hatters. The competition which they have to encounter is \$13,000 worth of hats annually imported, which, divided among the domestic manufacturers, would scarcely exceed the pro rata of 10 cents per man.

Let us now, Mr. Chairman, ascertain the amount

of competition against the tailors of the United States. The report of the Committee of Ways and Means shows that there was imported in 1840, '41, '42, about \$28,000 of ready-made clothing, paying ad valorem and specific duties; giving for each year an average of some \$9,000. There are in the country (as I have seen stated) about 100,000 tailors; the average competition, therefore, would be to each man a sum not exceeding the trifle of 10 cents per annum; or, in other words, a tariff of absolute prohibition against foreign clothing would give to the domestic makers 10 cents more per annum to each man than they have received under the late and existing laws. And notwithstanding, the American tailor is called upon to defend the cause of home protection against foreign competition, or else be driven from his shop-board.

But there is one more fact, Mr. Chairman, which I desire to give the committee from this report. It is this: that, under the operation of the first three-fourths of the present year, there was imported into the country \$175,000 worth of ready-made clothing, nearly twenty times the annual amount imported during the periods mentioned under the revenue tariff of the preceding years; and yet it is claimed that the present is a tariff of home protection!

But, sir, let me ask of gentlemen how the boot and shoemaker, tailor and hatter, are benefited by a law which gives them from 33½ to 50 per cent. protection, when, at the same time, it places a similar imposition upon all other manufactured articles which they have to buy? The tailor pays on his boots, hat, and clothing, and the clothing of his family; and upon his salt, sugar, pepper, spice, fish, &c., a far greater tax than is levied to protect him. So, also, with the hatter, and boot and shoemaker. They all pay, more or less in the protective tax upon their articles of family consumption, many times the amount of protection secured to them. I admit, sir, that if each man could, by law, be equally protected, neither would lose at the end of the year, nor could either be gainer; but such cannot be the operation of an insidious protective tariff. The protected classes will get along pretty smoothly; but the unprotected will feel the disadvantage of the burden imposed. The farmer you cannot protect, because there can be no competition to his business from abroad. The law, therefore, chains him down, and tells the protected classes to fleece him at their discretion. Yet, sir, the farmer, too, is exhorted to go for protection.

I shall now pass on, sir, to some other positions assumed by the advocates of an exorbitant tariff of protection. Gentlemen in this discussion have said that the fathers of the constitution were protectionists, and refer to the revenue law of 1790 to establish this declaration, quoting from the preamble of that law as their assumed evidence in the case. The word "protection" is found in that preamble, I admit; but does the preamble fix the impositions upon foreign goods specified in the law? The law itself, sir, is the true test; and by reference to the act of 1790, you will discover that the average duties upon imports were about 7 per cent. Descending from this period to 1815, the tariff laws averaged but an ad valorem scale of duties of 15 per cent. Sir, it is ridiculous for gentlemen to charge that we are disciples of free trade who advocate a revenue tariff of 25 or 33½ per cent. upon imports, while the fathers of the government, who levied a tariff of from 7 to 15 per cent., are claimed as having been the ad-

vocates of the federal doctrine of protection. I leave them to reconcile as they can the contradictory positions which they occupy in the attempt made by them to mislead the public mind, and impose doctrines upon the country as emanating from the fathers of the constitution that never were originated or sanctioned by them.

Sir, the end and object of this high protective policy should arouse the agricultural interest of the country to a just sense of the ultimate burdens that will rest upon it; for the prohibitory character of the policy is as certainly tending to direct taxation as that it exists. Can any one doubt the truth of this position, with the arguments of the advocates of protection before them? Do they not assume that the manufacturers of this country must be protected by law against the competition of other countries? And how is this competition to be prevented but by destroying it? Is it not insisted that such protection will, in a short time, enable our own manufacturers to furnish all we need, and at prices as low as any other country? What source of revenue, I ask, then, will be left to supply the wants of the government after the importations of all foreign goods are at an end? But one, sir; and that the landed interest of the country. The farmers will not only have the State governments to support, but the general government, with its immense expenditures. Think you, sir, that the interest which has been begging the government for a half a century for indirect bounties to support it, will agree to contribute a cent for its support? No; the cry of oppression will be raised, and appeals to the sympathies and patriotism of the country to save them from destruction; and, as now, they will be heard, and the burden rolled over upon the farming class of the country, as it ever has been. There is no ear to hear their remonstrance, no eye to pity them; they are to be the beasts of burden, from whose labor all the department's of the machinery of civil government are to be sustained, and the manufacturers into the bargain. Sir, nearly all the revenue collected and consumed by the government is drawn from the pockets of the farmer, by the indirect operation of the tariff; and the manufacturing class, if their prohibitive system is carried out, will change this indirect tax of eighteen millions of dollars, to a direct tax of the like amount. And if we submit much longer to their dictation, the chains of a manufacturing despotism will be fastened upon us, and the interests of all the other

classes sacrificed to its unhallowed cupidity. Sir, as I remarked before, I do not wish to be regarded as the enemy of this important branch of national industry and enterprise, whilst it is kept within its proper sphere; but when its gigantic strides to power and exclusiveness already threaten to annihilate (as it now paralyzes) the agricultural and commercial interests of the country, it is time to prescribe bounds to its encroachments, and expose its policy to the people. The history of the manufacturing interests in other countries is one of rapine and pauperism; and though it may never be potent enough here to victimize all the other interests of the country, yet its virus, struck deep as it is into our system, will impair more and more its healthy action, retard the developments of its resources, and finally reduce it to impotency and ruin. Sir, such monopolies as the present law is designed to foster, at the expense and almost sacrifice of all other interests, are but the disguised competitors for power with the government itself, and their influence the cancer that is eating out the vitals of the constitution. And if we contribute much longer, by such laws as the present, to give a precocious maturity to them, they may well claim to be the government, and proclaim that the constitution is but a bundle of abstractions, unworthy of the present age, and unfit for the government of the people. There is but one hope of escape from such a catastrophe; and it is in the firmness, honesty, and patriotism of the farmers and mechanics of the country. Their united voice can avert the usurpation, and their brawny arm protect the constitution from the ravages of such an enemy. But if they should much longer slumber upon the outposts of the constitution, the citadel of liberty will be in the possession of a worse than Gothic foe, who will prostrate its noble pillars, strike down the eagle of liberty, and in their places erect the throne of the despot, and the whelp of the British lion. Already the links of the cold chain of avarice are entwined around the hearts of a portion of our people, and deadened their sensibilities, I fear, to the calls and influences of patriotism; and nothing can arouse them but a true sense of the condition of the country, to an effort to reinsate the constitution, to impart once more its life-giving principles to the great interests of the country. *Now—now* is the time for the effort; and he who suffers the present occasion to pass unimproved, will live to condemn his error, and weep over the lost liberties of his country.